

BOARD OF SELECTMEN

April 17, 2007

Chairman Clark called the meeting to order at 7:32PM. Board members present were Stephen Clark, Richard Gandt, John McArdle, Boyd Jackson and Heidi Bond. Of the Selectmen's staff Town Administrator Virginia Wilder, & Donna Rich, Board Secretary, were in attendance. Other persons present were Jane Schraffa of Topsfield Cable, Dave Bond, Superintendent of Highway Department, Hilary Shepard of the Tri-Town Transcript and Chief Evan Haglund.

Announcements: Chairman Clark announced that a letter was received from Acting Chief Harrison stating that Officer Bud Holden had submitted a letter of resignation as a Reserve Police Officer effective May 31, 2007. Officer Holden had begun with the Topsfield Police Department in June of 1976 and has served the residents of Topsfield for over 31 years. During his tenure he received several letters of commendations.

Chairman Clark also announced that the Planning Board would be meeting tonight at the Library with a public hearing beginning at 8PM regarding amendments to the Open Space Development Plan and Table of Dimensional and Density Regulations.

Selectmen Minutes: Selectman Jackson made a motion to accept the minutes of April 9, 2007 as amended; seconded by Selectman Gandt; so voted 5-0. Selectman Bond made a motion to accept the minutes of the Executive Session of April 9, 2007 as amended and to hold until all issues have been resolved; seconded by Selectman Gandt; so voted 5-0.

Appointments:

Chairman Clark announced that an agreement for the Police Chief contract has been completed; and, Chief Evan Haglund is here to sign that contract. Chairman Clark welcomed Chief Haglund, as did all the other Board of Selectmen and Ms. Wilder. Chairman Clark stated that there is a long standing tradition that the Chief is to sign the contract first. The contract is effective May 1, 2007 and is a 3 year contract. Chief Haglund said he is excited about the challenges he has ahead. He has met many officers. They are a good group and are very dedicated to the town. The contract was signed by Evan Haglund and all Board members and a copy was given to Chief Haglund.

OLD BUSINESS:

Personnel Rules, Regulations & Policies: Ms. Wilder provided a summary stating that the Policy is to simplify the existing By-law making reference to the Policy, which is a 96 page document. The result of this is that changes can be made to the Policy without Town Meeting approval. Selectman Jackson stated that he had asked for a delay of one week and that he had no problem with the Policy as stated. It was again noted that the Personnel Advisory Committee did an excellent job in compiling the document. Selectmen McArdle noted the absence of the Town Clerk's salary from the Salary Plan in the document. He commented that, in his opinion, she is considerably underpaid. Ms. Wilder clarified that she is an elected official and her salary is set by the Finance Committee. She is included in all senior management meetings. Selectman Gandt made a motion to approve the Personnel Rules, Regulations & Policies as written, and Selectman Jackson seconded; so voted 5-0.

Verizon Cable: Selectman Gandt announced that he had been in contact with Bill Whiting of the Cable Committee and Verizon customers remain unable to view live telecasts from Channel 47. They are working on the issue, but no date for a resolution is known yet.

NEW BUSINESS:

Ipswich Rd Acquisition: Chairman Clark made an announcement that in accordance with 301 CMR 51.00 the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) is considering the acquisition of a conservation restriction on a parcel of land in Topsfield. The land contains approximately 8.75 acres on the northerly side of Ipswich Rd, bounded on three sides by Willowdale State Forest. The Conservation Restriction to be acquired is intended to protect and enhance in perpetuity the natural and scenic resources located on the property. It was stated that Essex County Greenbelt Association is a participant in this project. No objections were brought forward; it was noted that this is a great thing to have happen to this piece of property. Selectman Gandt made a motion to approve the Department of Conservation and Recreation's planned acquisition of the conservation restriction on the 8.75 acres on the northerly side of Ipswich Rd and to waive the 120 day notice period to 60 days, Selectman Jackson seconded; so voted 5-0. Selectman Gandt amended the motion to include that the Chairman is to sign the document provided on behalf of the Board of Selectman. Selectman Jackson seconded; so voted 5-0. Chairman Clark signed the documents. (see attached)

Chapter 90 Appropriation for FY08: A letter was received from the Governor's Office certifying Topsfield's funding under Chapter 90 for transportation infrastructure projects. The Town's appropriation for FY2008 is \$205,679, which is a 25% increase over FY2007.

Street Sweeping Contract: Selectman Gandt made a motion to sign the amendment to the previous contract with American Sweeping Co Inc of Port Washington, NY. The terms are to be extended beginning on April 1, 2007 with the amended amount not to exceed the contract limit of \$12,920.00. Selectman Jackson seconded; so voted 5-0. This is to clean the streets from the winter sand and salt.

Town Administrator's Report:

Please see attached report. Much discussion surrounded the recent storm and National Grid's response, or lack thereof. Dave Bond, Highway Superintendent came forward and assisted in the reporting of the events. Selectman Jackson asked if there has been any change in philosophy at National Grid. Mr. Bond noted that they are going through yet another acquisition, this time with Keyspan. A meeting will take place with National Grid officials to address the response and future expectations, Ms. Wilder and Mr. Bond will be in attendance. Ms. Wilder will conduct an after action review at the next Public Safety Committee and any citizen that has comments that should be addressed is welcome to call the Selectmen's office or send them in writing.

Correspondence & Reports

- Several letters and reports were received
 - MMA Action Alert
 - Anti-Crime Council Good Citizen Awards

- Planning Board Public Hearing for the Open Space Development Plan and Table of Dimensional and Density Regulations
- Complaint from Joan Panella regarding the Village Shopping Center and unsafe conditions. Chairman Clark stated that it is private property and the Town is in litigation with them in reference to the septic system. It was commented that with the resolution of the septic system could possibly come the resurfacing of the parking lot. Ms. Panella requested an ordinance to be placed on the Town Warrant, however, it is too late for the May Town Meeting. Selectman Gandt offered to pen a letter to the owner enclosing Ms. Panella's letter encouraging him to fix the problem, just informational, only 3 sentences with Town Council's review.
- T-Mobile Cell Tower. Selectman Gandt noted that informational letters were sent out a month ago to Topsfield residents within a ½ mile from the cell tower proposed location and 2-3 weeks ago Boxford residents were sent a letter. We have received 3 responses from Boxford residents in opposition to the cell tower location referring to health issues, reduction of property value, proximity to homes including three in a proposed sub-division. The proposed tower would be at least 700 feet from any home. Selectman Bond stated it very important to hear from residents.
- Division of Occupational Safety –Trench Safety Issues
- Notification of Employee Indictment and Suspension
- Employer Support of National Guard and Reserve Employees. Selectman Gandt stated that we support the National Guard and Reserve employees of the Town. Selectman Gandt made a motion to have the Chairman sign the Statement of Support for the Guard and Reserve. Selectman Bond seconded; so voted 5-0.
- Treasurer/Collectors Monthly Report
- Board of Assessors Minutes
- Finance Committee Minutes
- Conservation Commission, Amended OoC 5 Maple Lane
- Library Board of Trustees Minutes
- Establishment of Road, Water, and Parks & Cemetery Commissioners

Warrants: The Selectmen signed and approved warrants in the amount of **\$537,007.40**. The breakdown is as follows:

Warrant #FY07:

083T	\$ 78,880.06
083S	\$190,896.63
084	\$267,230.71

Selectman McArdle made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Selectman Jackson seconded; so voted 5-0, meeting was adjourned at 8:36PM.

Respectively submitted,

Donna Rich, Secretary
Selectmen's Office

Approved as amended at the April 23, 2007 Board of Selectmen meeting.